AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The replacement sheets in the Appendix include changes to Figure 1-3. In Figures 1-3, the previously omitted step descriptions have been added to empty boxes and the shapes of element 50 (documents) have been coordinated. In Figure 1, elements 58 and 70 have been deleted.

REMARKS

The specification, drawings, and abstract have been amended to make editorial changes therein, bearing in mind the criticisms in the Official Action, to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Claims 14-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101. These claims have been amended and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested. The step of making the databases available to users who interrogate the databases on the basis of themes contained in a request has been added to claim 14. This is a tangible result produced by the method.

Claims 14-26 were rejected under §112, second paragraph, and have been amended as to form. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested. The Official Action rejects claim 14 for having insufficient antecedent basis for "A method of thematically classifying documents." This rejection is not understood and clarification is respectfully requested. This phrase is in the preamble, which by definition is in the beginning of the claim, and therefore does not require an antecedent basis. In any event, claim 14 includes, among other steps, the step of "automatically classifying the downloaded documents as a function of the themes with which they deal." All other §112, second paragraph, rejections have been addressed by amendment.

Claims 14-26 were rejected as unpatentable over WILBUR et al. ("An analysis of statistical term strength and its use in the indexing and retrieval of molecular biology texts"). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

WILBER et al. defines the "strength" of a word and uses this strength to remove weak words from a set of words training a categorization learning system. However, the "strength" defined in WILBER et al. does not correspond to the claimed characteristic value representative of the relevance of a theme for a document. Two documents that are relevant to each other in the reference do not necessarily belong to the same theme. Since "strength" in the reference refers to relevance between documents, the strength does not necessarily relate to the theme of a document. Further, as is apparent from the example at pages 212-213 the strength is a mean value not related to a theme. If one considers that d1, d2, x1, and x2 belong to a first theme, that d1, d2, and x2 belong to a second theme, and that d3 and x3 belong to a third theme, then the calculated strength is not related to these themes since is a mean value. Accordingly, the reference does not disclose the step of or means for calculating a characteristic value representative of the relevance of that theme for the document, and thus these claims avoid the rejection under §103.

In addition, WILBUR et al. does not disclose the step of or means for automatically calculating a frequency of the element in the selected documents relating to the theme, automatically calculating a frequency of the element in the selected documents that do not relate to the theme, and automatically calculating the ratio of the calculated frequencies. The Official Action points to Figure 2 and formula 18 on page 219. However, the ratio disclosed therein is not the same ratio as claimed. The reference discloses a ratio of words removed to total words, not a ratio of the frequency of the element in the documents relating to the theme to the frequency of the element in the documents not related to the theme. There is no suggestion in the reference to find this ratio and the claims thereby further avoid the rejection under §103.

Claims 23-25 have been amended to recite a method, instead of a use.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional

fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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TWP/lk

APPENDIX:

The Appendix includes the following items:

- amended abstract

- three replacement drawing sheets